REMARKS

The Office Action of October 20, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

The present Amendment revises page 42 of the specification so as to mention step S24. Accordingly, the objection in section 1 of the Office Action should be withdrawn. The Amendment also revises a paragraph on page 22 of the specification to introduce terminology that now appears in the claims.

The present Amendment also revises the claims, both to improve their form under U.S. claim-drafting practice and to further distinguish the present invention from the Katakura et al reference (as will be discussed in more detail below). The present Amendment additionally cancels dependent claim 11 as redundant in view of the changes to its independent claim (that is, claim 8), and adds new dependent claims 17-19 to further protect the invention.

The present application is directed to a printer that employs LEDs to expose a photosensitive drum. As the application explains, these LEDs may have slight variations in their light-emitting characteristics. The prior art arrangement shown in Figure 21 of the application's drawings uses a memory 8 to store correction data for the LEDs. This correction data is used to compensate for the variations. However, the prior art arrangement shown in Figure 21 has problems that are discussed in the "Background of the Invention" portion of the present application. To avoid these problems, the present application discloses several embodiments of an LED printer that handles correction values in an improved manner. In the arrangement shown in Figure 1 of the present

application's drawings, for example, a memory 8 that stores the correction values is connected to strobe signal lines STB1-N to STB4-N. With this arrangement, the strobe signal lines can be used not only to strobe a driver section 8 so as to limit the peak current by actuating LEDs in a sequence of groups, the strobe signal lines can also be used to read out correction values from the memory 8 and transfer them to a print controller 1, which then transfers the correction values to the driver section 6.

Section 2 of the Office Action rejects independent claims 1 and 8 (along with two dependent claims) for anticipation by patent 5,864,253 to Katakura et al. This reference will hereafter be called simply "Katakura." For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the inventions now defined by independent claims 1 and 8 are patentable over this reference.

The Katakura reference is directed to a high-speed transmission circuit for conveying print data to an LED print head. Section 2 of the Office Action observes that Katakura's Figure 1 shows both a ROM and a RAM. The Office Action takes the position that the rejected claims just indicate an intended use for a memory, and that both the ROM and the RAM in Katakura's Figure 1 would have the capacity to store correction data.

Applicants respectfully disagree. As currently formulated, claim 1 recites "a memory for storing a plurality of correction values ...", and it is respectfully submitted that this recitation of the content of the memory is a structural limitation that cannot be ignored. Moreover, a claim 1 now recites that "a print controller reads the correction values out of the memory via the strobe signal lines and conveys the correction values to the driving section via the connection arrangement." Even if one were to assume (for the

sake of argument) that the memory content specified in claim 1 does not serve as a structural limitation with respect to the memory, quite clearly the recited operation of the print controller in reading out correction values from the memory via strobe signal lines is sufficient to distinguish the memory shown in Katakura's Figure 1.

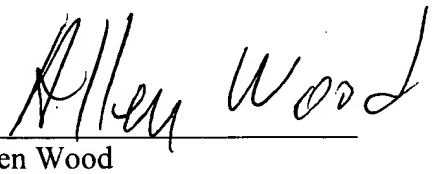
Katakura's Figure 2 shows chip compensation circuits 18 that compensate for variations in Katakura's LEDs (see Katakura's column 3, lines 11-14). However, an ordinarily skilled person would have no reason to think that Katakura's compensation circuits 18 are memories, since they adjust the current fed to the LEDs in four levels in response to two input signals SEL0 and SEL1 (column 3, lines 32-46). The reference is silent about the origin of Katakura's selection signals SEL0 and SEL1, and how they are conveyed to Katakura's chip compensation circuits 18. But even assuming for the sake of argument that Katakura's signals SEL0 and SEL1 are read out of one of the memories shown in Katakura's Figure 1, an ordinarily skilled person would not have been motivated by the Katakura reference to read correction values of the memory "via the strobe signal lines ..." in accordance with claim 1.

Independent claim 8 now recites that a print controller "reads the correction values of the first memory via the strobe signal lines for temporary storage of the correction values in the second memory, and thereafter conveys the correction values to the driving section ...". It is respectfully submitted that the Katakura reference neither discloses nor suggests a first memory which stores correction values that are read out via strobe lines and then stored in a second memory.

Since the remaining claims depend from the independent claims discussed above and recite additional limitations to further define the invention, they are patentable along with the independent claims and need not be further discussed.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Allen Wood
Registration No. 28,134
Customer No. 23995
(202) 326-0222
(202) 408-0924 (facsimile)

AW:rw